NUMB. CL.

The GUARDIAN.

——Neſcio quâ dulcedine læti,
Progeniem nidoſque fovent. Virg.

Wedneſday, September 2. 1713.

I Went the other Day to viſit *Eliza*, who, in the perfect Bloom of Beauty, is the Mother of ſeveral Children. She had a little prating Girl upon her Lap, who was begging to be very fine, that ſhe might go Abroad; and the indulgent Mother, at her little Daughter's Requeſt, had juſt taken the Knots off her own Head, to adorn the Hair of the pretty Trifler. A ſmiling Boy was at the ſame time careſſing a Lap-Dog, which is their Mother's Favourite, becauſe it pleaſes the Children; and ſhe, with a Delight in her Looks which heightened her Beauty, ſo divided her Converſation with the two pretty Prattlers, as to make them both equally chearful.

As I came in, ſhe ſaid, with a Bluſh, Mr. IRONSIDE, *though you are an Old Batchelor, you muſt not laugh at my Tenderneſs to my Children.* I need not tell my Reader, what Civil things I ſaid in Anſwer to the Lady, whoſe Matron-like Behaviour gave me infinite Satisfaction: Since I my ſelf take great Pleaſure in playing with Children, and am ſeldom unprovided of Plumms or Marbles, to make my Court to ſuch entertaining Companions.

Whence is it, ſaid I to my ſelf when I was alone, that the Affection of Parents is ſo intenſe to their Off-ſpring? Is it becauſe they generally find ſuch Reſemblances in what they have produced, as that thereby they think themſelves renewed in their Children, and are willing to tranſmit themſelves to future Times? Or is it, becauſe they think themſelves obliged, by the Dictates of Humanity, to nouriſh and rear what is placed ſo immediately under their Protection; and what, by their means, is brought into this World, the Scene of Miſery, of Neceſſity? Theſe will not come up to it. Is it not rather the good Providence of that Being, who in a ſupereminent Degree protects and cheriſhes the whole Race of Mankind, his Sons and Creatures? How ſhall we, any other way, account for this natural Affection, ſo ſignally diſplayed throughout every Species of the Animal Creation, without which the Courſe of Nature would quickly fail, and every various Kind be extinct? Inſtances of Tenderneſs in the moſt Savage Brutes are ſo frequent, that Quotations of that Kind are altogether unneceſſary.

If we, who have no particular Concern in them, take a ſecret Delight in obſerving the gentle Dawn of Reaſon in Babes; if our Paſſions are ſoothed with their half forming and ſtamm'ring articulate Sounds; if we are charmed with their pretty Mimickry, and ſurprized at the unexpected Starts of Wit and Cunning in theſe Miniatures of Man: What Tranſport may we imagine in the Breaſts of thoſe, into whom Natural Inſtinct hath poured Tenderneſs and Fondneſs for them! How amiable is ſuch a Weakneſs in Humane Nature! or rather, how great a Weakneſs is it, to give Humanity ſo reproachful a Name! The bare Conſideration of Paternal Affection ſhould methinks create a more grateful Tenderneſs in Children towards their Parents, than we generally ſee; and the ſilent Whiſpers of Nature be attended to, though the Laws of God and Man did not call aloud.

Theſe ſilent Whiſpers of Nature have had a marvellous Power, even when their Cauſe hath been unknown. There are ſeveral Examples in Story of tender Friendſhips formed betwixt Men, who knew not of their near Relation. Such Accounts confirm me in an Opinion I have long entertained, that there is a Sympathy betwixt Souls, which cannot be explained by the Prejudice of Education, the Senſe of Duty, or any other Human Motive.

The

(Price Two Pence.)

The Memoirs of a certain *French* Nobleman, which now lie before me, furniſh me with a very entertaining Inſtance of this ſecret Attraction, implanted by Providence in the Human Soul. It will be neceſſary to inform the Reader, that the Perſon, whoſe Story I am going to relate, was one whoſe roving and romantick Temper, joined to a Diſpoſition ſingularly Amorous, had led him through a vaſt Variety of Gallantries and Amours. He had, in his Youth, attended a Princeſs of *France* into *Poland*, where he had been entertained by the King her Husband, and married the Daughter of a Grandee. Upon her Death he returned into his Native Country; where his Intrigues and other Misfortunes having conſumed his paternal Eſtate, he now went to take care of the Fortune his deceaſed Wife had left him in *Poland*. In his Journey he was robbed before he reached *Warſaw*, and lay ill of a Feaver, when he met with the following Adventure; which he ſhall relate in his own Words.

'I had been in this Condition for four Days, 'when the Counteſs of *Venoski* paſſed that Way. 'She was informed that a Stranger of good Faſhion 'lay ſick, and her Charity led her to ſee me. I remembred her, for I had often ſeen her with my 'Wife, to whom ſhe was nearly related; but when 'I found ſhe knew not me, I thought fit to conceal 'my Name. I told her I was a *German*, that I 'had been robbed; and that if ſhe had the Charity 'to ſend me to *Warſaw*, the Queen would acknowledge it; I having the Honour to be known 'to Her Majeſty. The Counteſs had the Goodneſs to take Compaſſion of me; and ordering me 'to be put in a Litter, carried me to *Warſaw*, 'where I was lodged in her Houſe till my Health 'ſhould allow me to wait on the Queen.

'My Feaver increaſed, after my Journey was 'over, and I was confined to my Bed for fifteen 'Days. When the Counteſs firſt ſaw me, ſhe had a 'young Lady with her about eighteen Years of 'Age, who was much taller and better ſhaped than 'the *Poliſh* Women generally are. She was very 'fair, her Skin exceeding fine, and her Air and 'Shape inexpreſſibly beautiful. I was not ſo ſick 'as to overlook this young Beauty; and I felt in 'my Heart ſuch Emotions, at the firſt View, as 'made me fear that all my Misfortunes had not 'armed me ſufficiently againſt the Charms of the 'Fair Sex. The amiable Creature ſeemed afflicted 'at my Sickneſs; and ſhe appeared to have ſo much 'Concern and Care for me, as raiſed in me a great 'Inclination and Tenderneſs for her. She came 'every Day into my Chamber to enquire after my 'Health: I aſked who ſhe was, and I was anſwered, that ſhe was Neice to the Counteſs of *Venoski*.

'I verily believe that the conſtant Sight of this 'charming Maid, and the Pleaſure I received from 'her careful Attendance, contributed more to my 'Recovery than all the Medicines the Phyſicians 'gave me. In ſhort, my Feaver left me, and I had 'the Satisfaction to ſee the lovely Creature overjoy'd at my Recovery. She came to ſee me oftener as I grew better; and I already felt a ſtronger and more tender Affection for her than I ever 'had to any Woman in my Life: When I began to perceive that her conſtant Care of me was only a Pretence, to give her an Opportunity of ſeeing a young *Pole* whom I took to be her Lover. He ſeemed to be much about her Age, of a brown Complexion, very Tall, but finely Shaped. Every time ſhe came to ſee me the young Gentleman came to find her out; and they uſually retired to a corner of the Chamber, where they ſeemed to converſe with great Earneſtneſs. The Aſpect of the Youth pleaſed me wonderfully; and, if I had not ſuſpected that he was my Rival, I ſhould have taken Delight in his Perſon and Friendſhip.

'They both of them often asked me if I were 'in reality a *German*; which when I continued to affirm, they ſeemed very much troubled. One 'Day I took Notice that the young Lady and 'Gentleman, having retired to a Window, were 'very intent upon a Picture; and that every now 'and then they caſt their Eyes upon me, as if they had found ſome Reſemblance betwixt that and my 'Features. I could not forbear to aſk the Meaning of it; upon which the Lady anſwered, that if I had been a *French-man*, ſhe ſhould have imagined that I was the Perſon for whom the Picture was drawn, becauſe it ſo exactly reſembled me. I deſired to ſee it. But how great was my Surprize! when I found it to be the very Painting, which I had ſent to the Queen five Years before, and which ſhe commanded me to get drawn, to be given to my Children. After I had viewed the Piece, I caſt my Eyes upon the young Lady, and then upon the Gentleman I had thought to be her Lover. My Heart beat, and I felt a ſecret Emotion which filled me with Wonder. I thought I traced in the two young Perſons ſome of my own Features, and at that Moment I ſaid to my ſelf, *Are not theſe my Children*? The Tears came into my Eyes, and I was about to run and embrace them; but conſtraining my ſelf with Pain, I aſked whoſe Picture it was? The Maid, perceiving that I could not ſpeak without Tears, fell a weeping. Her Tears abſolutely confirmed me in my Opinion, and falling upon her Neck, *Ah, my Dear Child*, ſaid I, *yes, I am your Father*. I could ſay no more. The Youth ſeized my Hands at the ſame time, and kiſſing, bathed them with his Tears. Throughout my Life I never felt a Joy equal to this; and it muſt be own'd, that Nature inſpires more lively Motions and pleaſing Tenderneſs, than the Paſſions can poſſibly excite.

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